

Nature Connections

News and Events from the Missouri Department of Conservation • September/October 2016



We share many things with neighboring countries. Besides the obvious borders with Canada and Mexico, we also share culture, trade, tourism, geographic features, and, less conspicuous to most—birds. Many of the birds we enjoy in Missouri are not residents but rather migratory birds that only spend part of the year here. Ignoring boundaries, they are birds of more than one country; they belong to all of us.

A century ago, in 1916, the first protection from people for migratory birds was enacted between the United States and Great Britain (for Canada) called the Migratory Bird Treaty. For the first time, laws protected migratory birds from being hunted, pursued, taken, killed, possessed, sold, purchased, imported, exported, or transported. In addition, the law also afforded protection for all parts of the birds including feathers, and their nests or eggs unless permitted by the law. The treaty protects birds crossing international borders with a uniform system rather than relying on countries with differing values and policies for protection.

Migratory game birds are protected by different laws which govern hunting seasons and limits.

Sadly, this federal law came too late to save the once abundant passenger pigeon that became extinct in 1914 and the colorful Carolina parakeet which died out in 1918. The demise of these two species, along with others, helped to prompt the protection of the birds we enjoy today. The treaty is credited with saving species of birds including the yellow-billed cuckoo, Kirkland's warbler, snowy egret, and, undoubtedly, many more. Additional treaties were passed later with Mexico in 1936, Japan in 1972, and Asia in 1976 and other birds were added to the list of protected birds to include eagles, corvids—members of the blackbird and jay family—and others.

You may be surprised to learn that even a feather found on the ground is protected. While this may sound too restrictive, it is based on protecting birds. The Carolina parakeet's feathers, and even the entire bird—with its emerald green color and bright yellow head—were in high demand as adornments for women's hats. They, like other birds, were also captured from the

are allowed to collect feathers for religious ceremonies based on a 1962 update.

On an international level, this year-long celebration of the Migratory Bird Treaty brings awareness of migrating birds and the importance of conservation in protecting them as well as increased interest in all bird species. In Missouri, birders are encouraged to engage in birdwatching by visiting some of the best places to view birds. Nothing attracts birds better than suitable habitat and each natural community type attracts specific birds. To

discover some of these great birding areas, visit the new website, *Great Missouri Birding Trail* at <GreatMissouriBirdingTrail.com>. Besides discovering prime locations to birdwatch, learn how to attract birds to your backyard and find birdwatching tips and lists of local bird organizations such as the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society.

At the Springfield Conservation Nature Center, we have a variety of programs to connect you to birds. We are teaming with the Moxie Cinema for a special showing of *The Messenger*—a film about songbirds on October 1. The film is described as “a visually thrilling ode to the beauty and importance of the imperiled songbird . . .” We are also hosting book discussions on *Silent Spring*—the classic book by Rachel Carson, the “Patron Saint” of the environmental movement that alerted the world to how pesticides and chemicals were affecting bird populations in the 1960s. Finally, local musician and avid birder Bo Brown returns on October 20 to present *Nature And The Arts—Songs And Birds*. (For more information about these programs, see page 5.)

Spend some time appreciating the birds that share your world. Many have already begun their long and perilous southward migration. Unlike humans, birds don't have a passport to ensure their ability to cross international borders. Instead, they are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty—a uniform system for safe passage. That's worth celebrating.

—Linda Chorce, Nature Center Manager

Migratory Bird Treaty 100th Anniversary Of Protecting Birds



The prothonotary warblers we enjoy during the spring and summer spend the winter in Central America and parts of northern South America.

wild and kept as pets. Combined with habitat destruction, pesticide use, and wanton killing for damaging crops, survival proved difficult for many species of birds.

Prior to these laws, even avid bird lovers routinely kept eggs, nests, feathers, and taxidermy bird specimens in private collections. The rarer the bird the more valuable they were to a collector. Fortunately, photography and the advent of field guides replaced collections as a means of identifying birds.

Eagles are afforded even greater protection through the Bald and Golden Eagle Act. Violations may result in fines of up to \$100,000 for an individual or \$200,000 for an organization, imprisonment, or both. Penalties increase for subsequent offenses. Native American tribes

Joplin Office in the Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center

201 W. Riviera Drive, Suite B, Joplin, MO 64804 • mdc.mo.gov/wildcat



The Joplin Conservation Office, located in the Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center, is your local connection to Missouri's fish, forests, and wildlife. Stop by and purchase hunting and fishing permits, attend a nature program, go for a hike, enjoy a picnic, or access Shoal Creek. Within the 190 acres of Wildcat Park, you will find a diverse mix of wildlife habitats rich with flora and fauna. From I-44, take exit 6, and turn south on MO-86. Turn right on Riviera Drive to enter Wildcat Park.

JOPLIN OFFICE HOURS:

Monday–Friday: 8 AM–5 PM
Closed all state holidays.

AUDUBON CENTER HOURS:

Tuesday–Saturday: 9 AM–5 PM
Sunday: 1–5 PM (March–October)

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call **417-629-3423** to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

September Events

Tree Identification Walk

September 8 • Thursday • 6:30–7:30 PM
Leonard Park (Joplin) meet at shelter 6th Street and Turk Avenue
Registration is preferred (all ages)
What kind of tree is it? Is it native to the area or not? Is it invasive? How do we use it in our landscape? These are common questions you should ask when selecting a tree. The tree identification walk will answer many questions for each tree visited. Come for a leisurely walk in a local park and find a tree that is best for your yard next spring.

September and October Events

Basic Shotgun

September 12 • Monday • 5:30–8:30 PM
Fort Crowder Shooting Range (Neosho)
Registration required (ages 11 and up; ages 11–17 must be accompanied by an adult)
This is a basic shotgun course designed to get new shooters on target! We will discuss gun fit, basic shooting techniques, and breaking simple target presentations. Shotguns and ammunition will be provided; however, you may bring an unloaded shotgun and the ammunition you are comfortable shooting. Space is limited so register before September 8.

Alternative Hunting Methods Sampler

September 17 • Saturday • 3–6 PM
Fort Crowder Shooting Range (Neosho)
Registration required (all ages; handgun shooting is only open to those 18 years and up)
Join us for this Alternative Hunting Methods Sampler and learn about these “other” methods such as big boar handguns, crossbows, inline muzzleloaders as well as recurve bows, longbows, and the atlatl! All equipment and firearms will be provided as well as ammunition.

Tree Identification Walk

September 20 • Tuesday • 6:30–7:30 PM
Monett South Park located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Highway 60 and Highway 37. Meet in front of the Monett City Park Casino Building.
Registration is preferred (all ages)
What kind of tree is it? Is it native to the area or not? Is it invasive? How do we use it in our landscape? These are common questions you should ask when selecting a tree. The tree identification walk will answer many questions for each tree visited. Come for a leisurely walk in a local park and find a tree that is best for your yard next spring.

Prairie Jubilee

September 24 • Saturday • 10 AM–4 PM
Prairie State Park (Mindenmines)
No registration required (all ages)
Come celebrate the tallgrass prairie at Prairie State Park. Take part in activities such as a living history loop where visitors can interact with interpreters and others to learn what it was like to live on the prairie. Listen to live music and the sounds of the prairie. Take a ride out to see the bison and enjoy trying some bison for lunch. Discover this unique resource with conservation education professionals from various organizations and agencies that partner to help protect and preserve the tallgrass prairie. For more information call 417-843-6711.

Campfire Cooking With Kids

October 1 • Saturday • 3–5 PM
Walter Woods Conservation Area (Joplin)
Registration required (families, ages 5 and up)
Learn how to cook outside over the campfire for your next adventure. Parents, grandparents, and mentors discover fun and tasty ways to cook a meal and involve the whole family. We will be stirring up and tasting several delicious dishes while enjoying time in the out-of-doors.



Introduction To Archery

October 18 • Tuesday • 5:30–6:30 PM
Walter Woods Conservation Area (Joplin)
Registration required (families, ages 7 and up)
Learn the fundamental skills and safety of archery shooting. Discover the fun of this family activity and learn together outdoors. We will teach the basics including bow nomenclature, hand set, bow set, pre-draw, and proper stance to help you shoot more consistently and accurately. All equipment will be provided.

Holiday Closings: September 5 • Labor Day and October 10 • Columbus Day

Andy Dalton Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

4897 N. Farm Road 61, Ash Grove, MO 65604 • mdc.mo.gov/andydalton

September and October Events



Archery Basics For Families

September 8 • Thursday • 6–7:30 PM

Registration required (all ages)

Discover the basics of archery shooting. Topics covered will include bow nomenclature, hand set, bow set, pre-draw, stance, and much more. We will also shoot on the static archery range. You may bring your bow to the program or use one of ours.

Field To Freezer

October 22 • Saturday • 9 AM–12 NOON

Registration required (all ages)

Novice deer hunters can learn how to turn harvested game into packages of lean, healthy meat. This program will cover regulations, field dressing, supplies, transporting, and techniques for processing deer.

Field To Freezer

Through my work as an Outdoor Skills Specialist with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), I've had the privilege to instruct several *Field To Freezer* programs. At the start of each program, I like to ask people why they attend. Some of the answers are obvious, but others might surprise you. For some, ethics come into play. They feel that if they harvest a deer they should process it. Others want to eat only healthy, organic meat free of hormones or antibiotics. No matter the reason, by the end of the exercise, the participants realize the reasons why people want to process their own deer vary.

So how is the program delivered? So far I've been fortunate enough to obtain a freshly-harvested deer to use when instructing the program. Having an actual carcass to use to demonstrate technique and cuts is important. Over the years, I've used deer confiscated by MDC's Protection Division, donated by the public, or even one from my own harvest. The method I use is simple and efficient, few tools are needed, and most of what is needed can be found in nearly any kitchen.

With the process I use, the person is left with clean, tasty, healthy meat. They can decide what cuts they want, how they want to utilize the meat, and even how they want it packaged. It's simple! The money saved can fund another hunting adventure and the cycle continues.

So no matter your reason for attending, I hope to see you at the *Field To Freezer* program at the Andy Dalton Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center on October 22. Please call the Center at 417-742-4361 if you plan to attend. Program description is listed above.

—Greg Collier, Outdoor Skills Specialist



Deer Rifle Sight-In Days

No registration required and regular range usage fees apply

Beginning October 29, we will be open every day through November 11 from 9 am until 4:30 pm so hunters can use the shooting range for sighting in their deer rifles. A bore sighting system is available for loan to help save on your ammunition costs.

October 29–November 11 • Daily • 9 AM–4:30 PM

Holiday Closings: September 5 • Labor Day and October 10 • Columbus Day

National Hunting And Fishing Families Shoot Free Day

September 24 • Saturday • 9 AM–4:30 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Join us in celebration of *National Hunting and Fishing Day*. Bring your own firearms and ammunition. Enjoy a free day of shooting in honor of *National Hunting and Fishing Day*.



To get to the Andy Dalton Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center, take US Highway 160 west of Willard, turn south on Farm Road 61, and go 2.5 miles, facility on the west side of road. Facilities include an outdoor education center and archery, rifle, pistol, and shotgun ranges, including skeet and trap.

HOURS:

September 14–April 14

Monday and Thursday: 9 AM–4:30 PM

Friday–Sunday: 12 NOON–4:30 PM

April 15–September 13

Monday: 9 AM–4:30 PM

Thursday: 9 AM–7:30 PM

Friday–Sunday: 12 NOON–4:30 PM

Closed Tuesdays, Wednesdays and all state holidays. Hours are subject to change.

FACILITIES AND FEES:

Available for individual and group use. Call for information and possible restrictions.

- Rifle/pistol range fee: \$3 per booth per hour
- Trap/skeet range fee: \$3 per person per round of 25 clay targets
- Shotgun patterning range: \$3 per person per hour
- Archery range: \$3 per person per hour
- Group use fee: \$20 per hour plus \$3 per round of 25 clay targets

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call **417-742-4361** or email [<DaltonRange@mdc.mo.gov>](mailto:DaltonRange@mdc.mo.gov) to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

Springfield Conservation Nature Center

4601 S. Nature Center Way, Springfield, MO 65804 • mdc.mo.gov/springfield



The Springfield Conservation Nature Center is located in southeast Springfield just west of US-65 off the James River Freeway (US-60). Indoors, enjoy nature exhibits, attend programs, purchase hunting and fishing permits, browse through a nature-related gift shop, and pick up free conservation brochures. Outdoors, enjoy three miles of hiking trails through a variety of natural communities. Call to schedule a naturalist-led program for your organized group.

CURRENT HOURS:

March 1–October 31

Building: Tuesday–Saturday: 8 AM–5 PM

Sunday: 12 NOON–5 PM

Closed Mondays and state holidays

Trails: Sunday–Saturday: 8 AM–8 PM

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call **417-888-4237** to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

Temporary Exhibit

September

Nature Photography

by the Southwest Missouri Camera Club

September Events

Farewell To Summer Hummers

September 11 • Sunday • 5–6:30 PM

Registration begins September 1 (all ages)

Here's a last chance send-off for ruby-throated hummingbirds as they head for Mexico. Hummingbird bander Sarah Driver will share her knowledge about these tiny birds and attempt to capture and band some.

Story Time With Ms. Ladybug

September 14 • Wednesday • 11–11:30 AM

No registration required (ages 2–6)

Join Volunteer Naturalist Joyce Tolliver as she reads a nature story and shares activities with your 2–6 year olds. Please, no organized groups.

September Events

Backpacking For Beginners

September 15 • Thursday • 7–9 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 10–adult)

Join avid outdoorsmen Volunteer Specialist Don Brink and special guest Richard Donaldson for an introduction to backpacking. Learn about the types of equipment, things beginners should know, and places to go in the Ozarks. After attending this program, you'll be ready to venture out on your own.

Babes In The Woods

September 16 • Friday • 10–11 AM

September 17 • Saturday • 10–11 AM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 0–2)

Bring your children ages 0–2 for a guided nature walk with Volunteer Naturalist Dana Tideman. Bring a stroller and join the fun!

Conservation TEENS Catching Crawfish

September 17 • Saturday • 10 AM–4 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 12–17)

Lots of different crawfish inhabit the Ozarks creeks and waterways. Join us for the last river trip of the season. We will try to catch and identify crayfish.

Monarchs Rule!

September 17 • Saturday • 1–4 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 5–adult)

Every fall millions of monarch butterflies wing over the Ozarks to their winter home in Mexico. Join Volunteer Naturalists Bob and Ruby Ball and Dana Tideman for an indoor/outdoor adventure to explore the fascinating behavior and life cycle of these beautiful travelers.

Songs About Animals Public Recital

September 17 • Saturday • 6–7 PM

Registration begins September 1 (all ages)

Conservatory of the Ozarks music students—from toddlers to senior citizens—will provide a concert featuring "Songs About Animals." A variety of musical genres and instruments (including voice) will be included in this program for all ages. You're invited to wear your favorite animal costume to this fun event.

Conservation Kids Monarch Mysteries

September 22 • Thursday • 6:30–7:45 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 7–12)

Become a scientist and unravel some of the mysteries of monarch butterfly migration. Learn about their perilous journey to places unknown and discover more interesting trivia about their survival through games and activities. Please, no younger children and only one adult per group of kids.

Little Acorns

Programs are 45-minutes in length

Registration begins September 1 (ages 3–6)

Miniature Music Makers

September 8 • Thursday • 11 AM, 1:30 PM

Grasshoppers, crickets, and katydids provide some of the familiar sounds of summer. Join Volunteer Naturalist Nancy Ryan and learn how and why they make "music" and make a little insect music yourself.

'Possum Trot

September 21 • Wednesday • 9:30 AM, 11 AM, 1:30 PM

September 24 • Saturday • 11 AM

Where do opossums live? Do they swing by their tails? What do they have in common with dinosaurs? "Trot" on over to find out the answers to these questions as well as many others.

Mudbug Mystery

September 30 • Friday • 9:30 AM, 11 AM, 1:30 PM

Have you ever heard of a mudbug? Come and learn about these "crusty" creatures, also known as crayfish, and see some up close.

For Adults Only—Gills On The Fly

September 23 • Friday • 5:30–7:30 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 18–adult)

Fly-fishing isn't just for trout! Here's your chance to learn basic fly-fishing techniques while catching bluegill (catch-and-release only) at the Bois D'Arc Conservation Area education pond. Bring your fishing license, drinking water, and your lucky fishing hat! Meet at the pond where fishing equipment will be provided.

Take A Hike

September 24 • Saturday • 8:15 AM–5 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 18–adult)

While known for trout fishing, Roaring River State Park also has an array of hiking trails. Volunteer Naturalist Carmen Hallock will help you become familiar with their trail system. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Bring a sack lunch and water and wear comfortable hiking shoes. **Hike is five miles and rated moderate to difficult.**

Temporary Exhibit

October

Celebrating Nature's Art

by Gail E. Rowley, Ozark Stream Photography including a macro series "Tiny Worlds"

Springfield Conservation Nature Center

4601 S. Nature Center Way, Springfield, MO 65804 • mdc.mo.gov/springfield

October Events

The Messenger—Film At The Moxie Cinema On Songbirds

October 1 • Saturday • 1–2:30 PM

Registration begins September 15 (ages 18–adult)

We are teaming again with the Moxie Cinema for a special free showing of *The Messenger*—"a visually thrilling ode to the beauty and importance of the imperiled songbird, and what it will mean to all of us on both a global and human level if we lose them. In ancient times humans looked to the flight and songs of birds to protect the future. Today once again, birds have something to tell us." This award-winning 90-minute documentary film will show one time only at the Moxie, so don't miss it. (This film is not rated. View the trailer at <songbirdsos.com>.)

Primitive Skills Day

October 2 • Sunday • 1–5 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Primitive Skills Day returns! See demonstrations in flint knapping, bow and arrow construction, making cordage out of plant fibers, beadwork, and fire making from some of the Ozarks best primitive skills specialists. Try your hand at some of these age-old skills and enjoy Dutch oven cooking demonstrations and samples. Drop by anytime.

Book Discussions—*Silent Spring*

October 4, 11, & 18 • Tuesday •

9–10 AM OR 2–3 PM

Registration begins September 1 (ages 15–adult)

We encourage you to read for the first time or re-read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson. Often called the "Patron Saint" of the environmental movement, Carson alerted the world to how pesticides and chemicals were affecting bird populations. Her beloved book, translated into 30 languages and on the bestseller list for 86 weeks, is credited with protecting human health and the environment. Join us for progressive book discussions held weekly and led by retired Springfield-Greene County Librarian Lorraine Sandstrom for morning sessions or by Reference Associate and Volunteer Naturalist Kimberly Duquette for afternoons. Books will be available for loan.

Story Time With Ms. Ladybug

October 12 • Wednesday • 11–11:30 AM

No registration required (ages 2–6)

Join Volunteer Naturalist Joyce Tolliver as she reads a nature story and shares activities with your 2–6 year olds. Please, no organized groups.

Babes In The Woods

October 14 • Friday • 10–11 AM

October 15 • Saturday • 10–11 AM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 0–2)

Bring your children ages 0–2 for a guided nature walk with Volunteer Naturalist Dana Tideman. Bring a stroller and join the fun!

Fall Tree Identification

October 15 • Saturday • 9–11 AM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 12–adult)

Join Volunteer Naturalist and retired forester Earl Niewald for a tree identification hike. Learn to identify common trees by a variety of methods and enjoy spectacular fall color on this guided hike.

Nature And The Arts—Songs And Birds

October 20 • Thursday • 7–8:30 PM

Registration begins September 15 (ages 12–adult)

Local musician Bo Brown is well known for his musical talent but many may not know about his birding prowess. Drawing from his background in music, field biology, and primitive skills instructing, Bo will weave together a program featuring music, stories, images, and musings about birds, nature, and other outdoor pursuits during this special *Nature And The Arts* presentation co-sponsored by the Greater Ozarks Audubon Society.

Take A Hike

October 22 • Saturday • 8:15 AM–5 PM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 18–adult)

Explore Piney Creek Wilderness with Volunteer Naturalist Sandy Vaughn. Meet at the nature center and carpool. Bring a sack lunch and water and wear comfortable hiking shoes. **Hike is approximately five miles and rated moderate in difficulty.**

Beginner Archery—Conservation TEENS

October 22 • Saturday • 9 AM–12 NOON

Registration begins October 1 (ages 12–17)

Beginner Archery—For Adults Only

October 22 • Saturday • 1–2:30 PM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 18–adult)

Beginner Archery—Families

October 22 • Saturday • 2:30–4 PM

Registration begins October 1 (ages 10 and up with an adult mentor)

You don't have to be a hunter to become a skilled archer. Learn a new skill and spend time practicing. No experience is necessary and archery equipment will be provided. This program takes place on the archery range which is not ADA accessible.

Halloween Happening

Into the Woods With Red Riding Hood



October 27 • Thursday • 6:30–9:30 PM

October 28 • Friday • 6:30–9:30 PM

No registration required

Join Little Red Riding Hood as she faces her fear of the night and learns some important lessons about how animals survive in the dark. Guided hikes will be led on a first-come, first-served basis with the last hike leaving at 9 pm. Indoor activities will provide entertainment while waiting for a hike. Plan to spend 1.5 hours. Free popcorn and sodas will be served. Be prepared for some entertaining and extraordinary sights without the frights. Fun for all ages.

Meet The Artist—Gail Rowley

October 29 • Saturday • 2–2:45 PM

No registration required

Meet the featured October artist, Gail Rowley, and see a short presentation of nature photography including macro and super macro images and several mini videos of tiny nature worlds. Be sure to view her *Celebrating Nature's Art* on display in the lobby.

Programs are 45-minutes in length **Little Acorns**

Registration begins October 1 (ages 3–6)

Spider Safari

October 13 • Thursday • 9:30 AM, 11 AM, 1:30 PM

October 15 • Saturday • 11 AM

Spiders aren't so bad! Scurry in to learn what spiders eat, where they live, and why they're good to have around.

Going Batty

October 19 • Wednesday • 9:30 AM, 11 AM, 1:30 PM

Bats are one of the most misunderstood animals in nature. Go batty as we learn the truth about bats, how they survive at night, and why they are so important.

Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery and Conservation Center

483 Hatchery Road, Branson, MO 65616 • mdc.mo.gov/shepherd



The Fish Hatchery and Conservation Center is located on 221 acres in Branson off Highway 165 next to Table Rock Dam. Outdoors, visitors will experience an active fish hatchery with 700,000 rainbow and brown trout in 30 pools with opportunities to feed the fish. Indoors, enjoy a 3,500 gallon aquarium and hands-on nature exhibits and purchase hunting and fishing permits. The area also features four hiking trails, a picnic area, a boat ramp, and access to Lake Taneycomo.

FACILITY HOURS:

June–July–August:

Sunday–Saturday: 9 AM–6 PM

Remainder of Year

Sunday–Saturday: 9 AM–5 PM

Closed all state holidays

AREA AND TRAIL HOURS:

4 AM–10 PM

The area is open to fishing 24 hours daily, but special permits and regulations do apply. Check the current fishing regulations or call for details.

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call **417-334-4865**, Ext. 0, to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

FISHING LAKE TANEYCOMO:

Before fishing on Lake Taneycomo, become familiar with the regulations and restrictions. Come by for a free brochure of the entire lake including fishing accesses. For specific details about trout fishing here and across the state, visit short.mdc.mo.gov/Zkh.

September and October Events

Spider Sniff

September 23 • Friday • 7–8:30PM

Registration required (families, all ages)

Come learn what makes a spider different than an insect and how they are important to our surroundings. In addition to indoor activities, we will take a short hike to find wild spiders. Bring a flashlight.



Animal Pieces And Parts

October 28 • Friday • 7–9:30PM

Registration required (families, all ages)

This is our annual Halloween-style night event. Various fun indoor and outdoor stations will help you discover more about bones, feathers, feet, scales, and tails. You will soon see how each of these interesting parts help our native animals survive in the outdoors. Bring a flashlight.

Fall Webworms

It is not uncommon to find what at first appears to be large spider webs in a variety of trees in the fall. While they make great natural Halloween decorations, these webs are far from scary. The webs you see in the trees are not made by spiders, but actually made by caterpillars of native moths. These fall webworms are the caterpillars of *Hyphantria cunea* which will turn into small moths that are white with tiny black spots. It is not uncommon to see these webs throughout the summer as well as in the fall since they produce 2 to 3 generations each year. While these caterpillars feed on a variety of trees, they are more commonly seen on pecan, walnut, hickory, elm, persimmon, sweetgum, and a few fruit trees.

These silken nests allow the caterpillars to eat fresh leaves within the protection of their webbing. By spinning the web over fresh leaves, the caterpillars are less likely to be eaten by predators like birds. Not to be outdone, our native yellow-billed cuckoo uses its strong, curved beak to tear open these nests and eat large numbers of the hairy caterpillars inside.

Most landowners become concerned that these caterpillars are damaging their trees. The good news is that while unsightly, they rarely kill trees. The majority of the leaves that are eaten are the leaves that were going to fall off the tree in a few weeks anyway. Rarely do the trees die from fall webworms unless they were already sick or damaged before the fall webworms “set up camp.”

So what do you do? If you don’t mind the strange look of the webs, you don’t have to do anything. Some people will take a long stick or rake and remove the lower web clusters. Just by opening them up, you are giving birds and other predators a chance to eat these caterpillars. Fishermen often tear open these webbed nests to remove the larvae as floating fish bait. Like crickets, these larvae make great bait for sunfish. The one thing you do not want to do is to set the webs on fire. That is not only dangerous to the tree, but also dangerous for the entire neighborhood.

So enjoy our fall colors, but don’t be scared by seeing the large webworm clusters on the trees. Think of it as a natural reminder for Halloween. To see photos and learn more about fall webworms, go to the University of Missouri Extension website at extension.missouri.edu and search for PDFs of their publications IPM1019 and G7271 for a great guide of the caterpillars that find our trees and shrubs quite tasty.

—John Miller, Interpretive Center Manager

Holiday Closings: September 5 • Labor Day and October 10 • Columbus Day

Southwest Regional Office

2630 N. Mayfair Avenue, Springfield, MO 65803 • mdc.mo.gov/southwest



First Turkey Harvest

This year, at the age of 51, I harvested my first turkey. Growing up, I spent many years hunting turkeys with my grandfather. He was a great outdoorsman and he taught me how to hunt, but we never had success turkey hunting. The turkeys always outsmarted me. One would gobble on my right and show up on my left where I wasn't watching and escape before I could shoot. Or, I would get too excited and just plain miss.

After more than 25 years of not hunting turkeys, my hunting buddy Sam and I decided to try. We have always hunted deer and been very successful so off to the woods we went under a full moon on opening weekend. It was a warm morning and the birds were chirping. What a great time to be outdoors!

As daylight broke, we sat on the edge of a field waiting to hear a gobble. At first we heard nothing and Sam suggested we move further down. By this time, it was light outside. Just as we got to a few trees at the field's edge, we heard a gobble. I had forgotten how fast the old heart rate could go up as we scrambled to find the best place to set up. After a few minutes of playing musical trees, Sam began calling. Four gobblers just over the hill answered. It was not long before I saw two turkey heads headed our way. I heard hens just out of sight also calling; Sam had competition. Sam continued to call and I could hear the two birds answer. Unfortunately, the two gobblers headed down the hill toward the real hen calls and disappeared.

We didn't have to wait long before I glimpsed some tail feathers close by. I signaled Sam and once again the turkey gave an answering gobble. I had heard the sounds of thunder right on top of me before, just waiting to see the turkey, but it always ended in failure. This time, being well hidden by brush, I had the upper hand. Suddenly I saw the bird that had always eluded me in full strut coming toward me along the fence line. I had my gun up. My heart was pumping. I told myself to calm down, go through the checklist in my head, and make sure I had the bead on the target and it was safe to shoot. I squeezed the trigger and saw the bird fall.

All I could think was to get up and run over to the bird and make sure it didn't get away. As I ran, turkeys flew everywhere! I then remembered Sam. If I had waited a few seconds, maybe he could have harvested a bird also. Sam told me it was worth the price of the permit to watch me harvest my first turkey! I can't believe I had missed out on this excitement for all these years. I went hunting several more mornings this season and harvested a second bird on the last day. I'm thankful my grandfather started taking me hunting at a young age. I know my grandfather was in heaven looking down and was very happy that I finally harvested something that we had tried so hard to get when I was a kid.

—Richard Stirts, Forestry Resource Technician



The Southwest Regional Office is conveniently located just west of the intersection of US-65 and Kearney in Springfield. The public may obtain information on land management, nuisance wildlife, educational opportunities, river and pond management, and more, as well as purchase hunting and fishing permits and obtain area brochures for Conservation Department areas.

HOURS: Monday–Friday: 8 AM–5 PM
Closed all state holidays

PHONE: 417-895-6880

Hunter Education Sessions

Knowledge (Classroom) Sessions

Location

Springfield Conservation Nature Center September 9 • Friday • 6–10 PM
October 7 • Friday • 6–10 PM

Skills Sessions

Location

Date/Time

Springfield Conservation Nature Center ...	September 10 • Saturday • 8 AM–12 NOON or 1–5 PM
	October 8 • Saturday • 8 AM–12 NOON or 1–5 PM
Andy Dalton Shooting Range	September 3 • Saturday • 8 AM–12 NOON
	October 1 • Saturday • 8 AM–12 NOON
Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center	September 14 • Wednesday • 6–10 PM
	September 19 • Monday • 6–10 PM
	October 3 • Monday • 6–10 PM
	October 12 • Wednesday • 6–10 PM

Reminder

Hunter-education certification has two parts: knowledge and skills. You must complete and pass **BOTH** sessions to earn your certificate. For more information on Hunter Education, contact your local Missouri Department of Conservation office or visit the Conservation Department website at short.mdc.mo.gov/Zkg.

Visit short.mdc.mo.gov/ZkY to register for these sessions and to check for session changes and/or other locations.

Halloween Hikes

Halloween Happening Into The Woods With Red Riding Hood

Springfield Conservation
Nature Center

October 27 • Thursday • 6:30–9:30 PM

October 28 • Friday • 6:30–9:30 PM

No registration required (all ages)

See page 5 for more details.

Animal Pieces And Parts

Shepherd of the Hills
Fish Hatchery and
Conservation Center

October 28 • Friday • 7–9:30 PM

Registration required (families, all ages)

See page 6 for more details.

20% Off Special

A guide to hunting, identifying, and cooking the state's most common mushrooms. An easy visual key aids identification and clear guidelines help you distinguish edible mushrooms from poisonous ones.



Featured Publication for
September and October

Available at the Springfield Conservation
Nature Center and Southwest Regional Office.

Nature Connections Newsletter

To begin receiving the newsletter by mail, call any of the offices listed in the newsletter and leave your name and address.

To begin receiving the newsletter electronically by email, go online to <mdc.mo.gov/govdelivery>, enter your email and subscribe to "News, Events and Newsletters - Southwest Region."

Conservation Showcase:

Compton Hollow Conservation Area

LOCATION: Compton Hollow Conservation Area (CA) is located in Webster County between Rogersville and Marshfield. The area can be reached by taking exit 96 on I-44 and traveling south on State Highway B for 5 miles to Compton Hollow Road. There are two parking lots that provide access to the south side of the property and the archery range. The north side can be accessed by taking Conservation Lane off State Highway B.

HISTORY: The conservation area is 840 acres of oak-hickory forest that is managed for wildlife habitat, timber production, forest health, and outdoor recreation. The area consists of two university tracts that were combined with land purchased from a private landowner in the mid-1980s. Additional purchases were made later that increased the size to the current 840 acres. Various management activities can be seen including timber stand improvement, prescribed burning, invasive species management, and timber harvesting.

Compton Hollow CA contains two distinct natural features—several small dolomite glades and a dry-mesic chert woodland. The forested areas are managed by dividing the forest into stands based on characteristics such as topography, tree species, and soil type. A forest inventory is conducted on each stand to determine the density of the trees and the tree species present. A forest management plan is then written for each stand based on the inventory data and to reach desired management objectives. The forest is managed on an uneven-aged basis which creates several stands that are in different stages of growth. There are stands that have been thinned, selectively harvested, or a combination of both. This creates a variety of forest habitats that are beneficial to wildlife at different times of the year. These features are protected and managed to maintain or increase their natural qualities. There are several old fields that make up around 75 acres of the property. These fields are burned on a two- to three-year schedule to reduce the woody competition and encourage native grasses and forbs. The fields are managed for native vegetation to provide nesting cover and small game habitat. The area also has several small fishless ponds that were created for wildlife watering holes. There is an unmanned archery range located on the south side of the property. It can be accessed from the east parking lot on Compton Hollow Road. There are six shooting stations with some stations having multiple targets.

FISHING AND HUNTING: There are no fishing opportunities on this area. Hunting is open to statewide regulations, except deer hunting which is subject to annual changes. Hunters should refer to the *Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information* brochure for current regulations. There is a special use hunting area on the north side of the area for hunters with medical exemptions. It is located near the parking lot off of Conservation Lane and the boundary is marked with orange paint. The location is also shown on the area brochure and Special Use Permits can be obtained from the Southwest Regional Office (417-895-6880). The forest management practices create many different habitat types that deer, turkeys, and other wildlife utilize. In the fall the mixed oak forest provides an abundance of acorns providing an important food source for wildlife. The old field areas and the forested areas that have been thinned provide additional food sources in years with low acorn production. Small game hunting is very popular at Compton Hollow CA. The oak-hickory forest supports a very good squirrel population and the old fields offer a limited opportunity for rabbit hunting. The hunting pressure can be high at times due to the close proximity to the city of Springfield and other metropolitan areas.

CAMPING AND HIKING: Primitive camping is allowed. Groups of ten or more campers need a Special Use Permit issued by the Area Manager. Contact the Southwest Regional Office at 417-895-6880 to obtain this permit. There are no designated campsites on this area.

There are 5.5 miles of multi-use trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding. A portion of the trails follow service roads while the rest are a single path wide enough for one person. The trails travel throughout most of the property and cross several areas that are steep, rocky, or muddy depending on the weather. They allow people to see the different types of habitat on the area and are popular during the fall when leaves are changing. Trails are closed to horseback riding and bicycling during the spring turkey and fall firearms deer seasons. Visit <short.mdc.mo.gov/Z4x> for more information on Compton Hollow CA.

—Dustin McCleary, Forestry Resource Assistant